

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on October 8, 2003.

Amendment to the Drawings

Enclosed is an Amendment to the Drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d) with the submission of one (1) sheet of corrected formal drawings for filing in the above-identified application.

Page 2/8, featuring FIG. 2, is submitted with the following correction: In the last text box, the spelling of the word "ARTICLE" is corrected from "PRTICLE." Acceptance of this drawing correction is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C §112, 2nd paragraph

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Office Action required clarification because "the molded elastomer" lacked antecedent basis within the claims. Accordingly, claim 2 has been amended to replace the word "elastomer" with "polymeric article." "Molded polymeric article" finds proper antecedent basis in claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicated that claims 4, 9, 16 and 22 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 4 and intervening claim 3. The Office Action has indicated that claim 1 is allowable as amended. Because the subject matter of claim 3 and 4 has been included in claim 1, claims 3 and 4 are hereby canceled. Claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 1 rather than now-canceled claim 3. Notice of the

allowability of independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 5-8, 10-13 and 25 is respectfully requested.

Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of original claim 1. New claims 28-35 depend from claim 9 and recite subject matter which is fully supported by the original specification. Therefore, notice of the allowability of independent claim 9 and its dependent claims 28-35 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 14 has been amended to include the limitations recited in original claim 16; claim 16 is therefore canceled. Notice of the allowability of independent claim 14 and its dependent claims 15 and 17-21 is respectfully requested.

Claim 22 has been rewritten in independent form, including the limitations of original independent claim 14 and intervening claim 17. Notice of the allowability of independent claim 22 and its dependent claims 23-24 is respectfully requested.

Claims 26 and 27 are hereby canceled. New independent claim 36 and dependent claims 37-46 are hereby presented. Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 36 recites subject matter which is fully supported by the original specification and allowable in view of the prior art. Applicants respectfully request notice of the allowability of independent claim 36 and its dependent claims 37-46.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have attempted in earnest to address each issue raised in the Office Action of October 8, 2003. In view of the foregoing, Applicants request notice of the allowability of all pending claims 1-2, 5-15, 17-25 and 28-46.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0982.

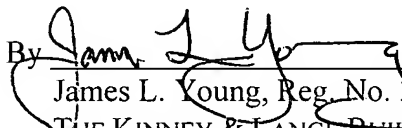
Respectfully submitted,

KINNEY & LANGE, P.A.

Date:

December 12, 2003

By


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